

TESTIMONY OF CHIEF RANDALL GROVES – FIRE CHIEF – CITY
OF EUGENE
1 MAY 2009

We appreciate you taking the time to come to our community to listen to us. I am the Fire Chief of the City of Eugene and I too am here to speak to OWIN. But first I want to acknowledge the difficult decisions that you have to make after listening to all the, in some cases, heartbreaking testimony you've listened to today.

Nevertheless, we are here to speak to OWIN, the Oregon Wireless Interoperability Network. As Chief Nelson testified, we have an aging infrastructure that will be made worse by changes in the FCC requirement for spectral efficiency. In 2013 and again in 2018 we will have significant degradation of our emergency system. Public safety community members of our State need to have reliable emergency responders if we're able to talk to one another. After 30 years in the fire service...for every major incident where we've had failures it's been attributed to communications. That's what the OWIN project seeks to correct.

Looking at 9/11 and the World Trade Center and beyond, that's where failures occurred, in communications. We feel strongly in trying to correct this system. Not only for our communities but for the safety of our responders who on a routine basis step into harm's way to protect the safety of the community members of our great State.